1996-97

1.	Sami	Mehsana	500
2.	Dhanara	Banaskantha	500
3.	Tharad	Banskantha	500
4.	Radhanpur	Banaskantha	500
5.	Songadh	Surat	500
6.	Sagbara	Bharuch	500
7.	Gadhada	Bhavnagar	500
8.	Rajula	Amreli	500

(b) No proposal of State Government is pending with Central Government.

(c) Does not arise.

Investigations into Irregularities in SAIL

1764. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have asked CBI to look into allegations of irregularities levelled against the S commercial alliances between 19 1994;

(b) if so, the details of commercial alliances held by SAIL between 1992 and 1994;

(c) whether Government propose to investigate and take action against the involved officials of SAIL who conducted irregularities in the allotment of steel to various traders; and

(d) if so, the facts and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL & MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA): (a) to (d) Allegations of irregularities, as and when received, are inquired into and action taken on merits. Ministry of Steel has not asked for any CBI enquiry; there is no specific scheme known as commercial alliance under which SAIL supplies materials to its customers. SAIL has in fact various schemes in vogue under which it supplies materials to its customers. All the eligible customers under the various schemes are allowed to book the materials uniformly without any discrimination. The schemes which SAIL operated during the year 1992-93 to 1994-95 under the extant guidelines are as under:—

Year	Schemes
1992-93	— Demand Registration scheme
	— Annual Booking scheme
	— Long Term Booking scheme
	— Quarterly Booking scheme
1993-94	— Annual Booking scheme
	— Long Term Booking scheme
	— Quarterly Booking scheme
	— Memorandum of Understanding scheme
	— Continuous Booking scheme
1994-95	— Memorandum of Understanding scheme
	— Annual Booking scheme
	— Quarterly Booking scheme
	— Continuous Booking scheme

Decline in Export of Agricultural Products from Orissa

1765. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been a steep decline in the export of agricultural products in Orissa;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and the reasons therefor;

(c) the steps taken to increase the export of agricultural products; and

(d) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) and (b) The exports of agricultural and allied products (excluding tea, coffee, raw cotton and marine products) were valued at Rs. 7049.04 crores and Rs. 13,336.68 crores during the years 1994-95 and 1995-96 respectively. Statewise export statistics are not maintained.

(c) and (d) Steps taken to enhance export of agricultural and allied products include simplification of inspection procedures, removal of minimum export price and quantity restrictions on selected items, provision of concessional credit, product development to meet international needs, extension of benefits available under the scheme of EOUs/ EPZs to agriculture sector and permitting 50% sale in the domestic tariff area, assistance to exporters for improved packaging, strengthening of quality control, air freight subsidy on export of selected horticultural, floricultural products and fresh vegetables to identified destinations, promoting export of identified products through brand promotion campaigns, arranging buyer-seller meets and participation in international fairs/exhibitions.

Expansion of WTO Agenda to include Labour

1766. SHIR VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the World Trade Organisation has expanded the agenda to include the labour issues;

(b) if so, whether Government have clarified its views on the issues; and

(c) the steps taken to mobilise the support of developing nations to protect their interest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH): (a) No, Sir. However, some developed countries like USA and Norway have proposed that the World Trade Organisation (WTO) discuss the relationship between trade and core labour standards in the WTO.

(b) India has opposed this proposal.

(c) The matter was discussed with other developing countries in the preparatory Meeting to the Singapore Ministerial Meeting held in New Delhi in September 1996. In addition, India is continuously coordinating her position with other like minded countries in opposing such a linkage. The outcome on this issue will be decided at the WTO Singapore Ministerial Conference to be held from December 9—13, 1996.

Children Working in Hazardous Industries

1767. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of child labour in the country at present;

(b) the number of children working in hazardous industries in the country; and

(c) steps Government have taken to abolish child labour in the hazardous industries and the results thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) and (b) According to 1981 census, the total number of working children in India was 13.6 million. According to the 43rd round of National Sample Survey conducted in 1987-88 to total number of working children increased to 17.02 million. The date regarding the working children as per 1991 census are yet to be released. It is estimated that presently there would be around 20 million working children. Out of the total child labour population,